



Germany: Facts & Figures April 2006

A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany

Federal Politics

If Bundestag elections were held on April 30, the CDU/CSU would receive 37% of the vote, the SPD 29%, the Green Party 9%, the FDP 11%, the PDS (with WASG) 9%, and all other parties combined 5%. (forsa. 04/26/06)

Economy

The unemployment rate decreased to 11.5% in April (12% in March), with 4.79 million unemployed. (Labor Exchange, 04/27/06)

According to Germany's six leading economic institutes, the economy will grow at 1.8% in 2006, up from a predicted 1.2% six months ago. (Major papers, 04/26/06)

German business confidence rose to a 15-year high in April, with business sentiment rising from 105.4 in March to 105.9 in April. While retailers were more cautious, exporters expressed great confidence in the future. (ifo. Major papers, 04/26/06)

A poll among 400 business leaders shows that 58% are satisfied with Chancellor Merkel's performance. 55% are happy with the economic policy of the grand coalition. (Financial Times Deutschland, 04/19/06)

29% of companies plan to increase the number of employees (up 3% compared to February 2006), and 21% plan to lay off employees (unchanged to February). (Spiegel.de, 04/11/06)

The planned increase in the VAT from 16 to 19% next year could result in an increase of the inflation rate from a current 2.1% to 3.5%. (Federal Statistical Office, 04/07/06)

Society

Violence by sympathizers of Germany's far-right fringe increased by nearly a quarter last year. Police registered 958 acts of violence committed by members of the far-right, up from 776 the previous year. Cases of bodily harm caused by people with far-right backgrounds rose to 816 from 640. The number of hard core neo-Nazis in Germany increased to 4,100 from 3,900 last year. (Die Welt, 04/26/06)

77% of Germans hold the opinion that Iran must not be forced to renounce its nuclear weapons program with military means. 19% support military action. (Forsa. 04/26/06)

According to the circulation figures for dailies for the first quarter of 2006, Sueddeutsche had the biggest circulation with 445,530 copies (up 1.2%), FAZ dropped 0.7% to 370,777, while Frankfurter Rundschau lost 6% and sells 161,301 copies. (Die Welt, 04/26/06)

21% of respondents agree that higher taxes are necessary for the Government to continue fulfilling its duties and responsibilities, 75% disagree. (infratest/dimap. 04/26/06)

In 2004, Germany spent EUR 193.3 billion on education, research and science (2003: 193.9 billion). The decrease is due to lower education expenditure by the Federal Employment Agency (- EUR 1.9 billion). (Federal Statistical Office. 04/26/06)

In 2004, 39% of the population in Germany (32.5 million of a total of 82.5 million) indicated income through employment as their most important source of subsistence (1991: 44%). The main income for 5% of the population was unemployment benefits (1991: 2%), for 23% pensions (1991: 19%) and 29% were dependent on support through their families. (Federal Statistical Office. 04/26/06)

The public sector spent an average EUR 4,600 per pupil at public schools in 2003 (unchanged to 2004). While EUR 5,000 was spent per pupil at schools of general education, the amount was EUR 3,200 per pupil at vocational schools. Among the schools of general education, expenditure per pupil ranged from EUR 3,900 at primary schools to EUR 5,400 at grammar schools to EUR 11,700 at special schools. The relatively high expenditure for special schools primarily results from a low pupil-teacher ratio. (Federal Statistical Office. 04/18/06)

22% of respondents have stopped eating poultry products because of the Avian flu, 75% have not changed their eating habits. (infratest. 04/06/06)

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